

## **Transformation of the Holocaust testimony in the digital age**

The primary aim of the project is to explore and analyze the new strategy of 'Holocaust witnessing' in the digital age. In a time when different measures are designed and applied in order to extend the physical presence of survivors, my research focuses on the turn from the first-hand witness speaking and performing by survivors, into holographic representations; a popular strategy to preserve memory about the Holocaust, which is developed over the last few years.

The key object of the proposed study will be the USC Shoah Foundation Dimensions in Testimony project launched by the USC Shoah Foundation and the USC Institute for Creative Technologies Design. It is an initiative aimed at registering survivors in the form of 3D holograms, which are then made available, either to institutions as part of museum exhibitions, or to schools as part of educational projects in the field of disseminating knowledge and teaching about the Holocaust. This is the first such advanced question and answer program used in the narrative of the Holocaust, which is the original answer to technological development, which has been made in recent decades, and most importantly allows recipients on interactive contact with a survivor of the Holocaust, something that has not previously could be achieved by using any recording or data storage medium Starting from 2012, this project is presented - so far - in American Holocaust museums.

USC Shoah Foundation Dimensions in Testimony project is a complicated research object, the description of which should reflect on the status and position of the survivor in the digital age, how the transfer of memory takes place, but also consider the issues of institutionalization and technologization of testimony, consider the place where holograms are presented, how they affect recipients, how hologram act as a tool for prolonging survivor's existence, and finally what ethical choices are associated with implementing such a project.

The Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center in Skokie was the institution initiating the presentation of holograms, and the first survivor recorded in this way was in 2004 Pinchas Gutter, whose hologram is presented in the aforementioned museum. Thus, one of the project's significant tasks of the project plan is field research at the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Skokie, during which I will be able to interview the employees of the institution, get more information about the project, collect all the necessary data on how was the process of recording and implementing the project in the museum looked like, and most importantly I will conduct my own conversations-interviews with holograms of survivors and checking how this technology works in practice. I will analyze holographic testimonies given by Holocaust survivors presented there, i. e. Pinchas Gutter and Fritzie Weiss Fritzhall, in terms of how the survivors were recorded, how they lead the narrative, how they are presented? In addition, using the data collected in the museum and my own observations, I want to conduct an audience survey to check what responses among visitors cause this form of presentation of survivors?

The turn to virtual witnessing slowly gains the attention of established scholars, however, only a handful of analyses is available so far, including both theoreticians as well as practitioners and project creators. Nevertheless, the research problem proposed in this study has not yet been reflected in complex study or full-length monographs. A comprehensive analysis that I propose will constitute a needed supplementation of the already established data, and the conclusions will enrich the knowledge on this project, ways of dealing with similar phenomena, and the evolution of the testimony in the digital age.